

Message Text

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15
ACTION SIL-01

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FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8367
INFO USMISSION GENEVA
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ILO, ICFTU
SUBJECT: ICFTU LEADERS DISCUSS PLO OBSERVER STATUS AND
EAST/WEST CONFERENCE

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: ON FEBRUARY 26 ICFTU GENERAL SECRETARY KERSTEN AND ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY VANDERVEKEN MET WITH A GROUP OF BRUSSELS-BASED LABOR ATTACHES TO BRIEF THEM ON ILO-RELATED MATTERS. THE ICFTU IS ATTEMPTING TO ARRANGE FOR A SECRET VOTE ON THE PLO OBSERVER STATUS ISSUE AT THE ILO GOVERNING BODY. KERSTEN AND VANDERVEKEN ESTIMATE "VERY ROUGHLY" THAT APPROXIMATELY 30 GOVERNING BODY MEMBERS WILL SUPPORT THE PLO. ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE TO HOLD A JOINT ICFTU-WCL CAUCUS ON FEBRUARY 27 TO DISCUSS THE FEBRUARY 28-MARCH 1 EAST-WEST TRADE UNION CONFERENCE AT GENEVA. END SUMMARY.

2. ON FEBRUARY 26 ICFTU GENERAL SECRETARY KERSTEN TOLD A GROUP OF BRUSSELS-BASED LABOR ATTACHES THAT
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THE ICFTU HAS ASKED THE ILO FOR A LEGAL INTERPRETA-

TION CONCERNING THE POSSIBILITY OF HAVING A SECRET VOTE ON THE QUESTION OF PLO OBSERVER STATUS AT THE ILO GOVERNING BODY MEETING. KERSTEN SAID HE WAS NOT OPTIMISTIC ABOUT GETTING A SECRET VOTE, BUT BELIEVES IT WOULD BE THE ONLY WAY OF STEMMING THE TIDE IN FAVOR OF THE PLO. KERSTEN AND VANDERVEKEN TOLD THE ATTACHES THAT THEY "VERY ROUGHLY" ESTIMATE THAT THE PLO ALREADY HAS ABOUT 30 OF THE 47 VOTES ON THE GOVERNING BODY WITH THE BULK OF THEM COMING FROM THE GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES. HE REPEATED AN EARLIER STATEMENT THAT THE POSSIBILITY OF DELAYING THE ISSUE IS PRACTICALLY NIL.

3. KERSTEN SAID THAT THE ICFTU CONTINUES TO INSIST THAT EAST/WEST CONFERENCES OF EUROPEAN TRADE UNIONS BE HELD UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE ILO. HE ADDED THAT THE ICFTU WILL STRONGLY OPPOSE ANY EFFORT ON THE PART OF THE SOVIETS TO ESTABLISH A STRUCTURE OR PERMANENT SECRETARIAT FOR FUTURE EAST/WEST CONFERENCES. HE DOES NOT BELIEVE THE SOVIETS WILL ACHIEVE EITHER, ALTHOUGH HE ADMITTED THERE IS SENTIMENT AMONG WEST-EUROPEAN UNIONS TO REMOVE THE CONFERENCES FROM UNDER THE ILO UMBRELLA.

4. THE ECFTU WILL BE REPRESENTED AT THE EAST/WEST CONFERENCE BY ENZO FRIZO OF HEADQUARTERS STAFF AND ICFTU GENEVA REPRESENTATIVES AQUIRIANO AND SUSSEX. UNOFFICIAL OBSERVERS FROM THE ETUC SECRETARIAT WILL BE SECRETARIES MISLIN AND KULAKOWSKI. KERSTEN RECONFIRMED THAT THE JOINT ICFTU-WCL CAUCUS TO DISCUSS THE EAST/WEST CONFERENCE WILL BE HELD IN GENEVA ON FEBRUARY 27.

5. FOR GENEVA: CYRIL MARSHALL, BRITISH LABOR ATTACHE TO BELGIUM, WILL BE IN GENEVA DURING THE EAST/WEST CONFERENCE. HE IS AN ASTUTE OBSERVER AND IS VERY CLOSE TO BRITISH TUC AS WELL AS ICFTU AND WCL REPRESENTATIVES SCHEDULED TO ATTEND THE CONFERENCE. THE MISSION SUGGESTS THAT HE BE CONTACTED BY US MISSION GENEVA FOR HIS ON-THE-SCENE ASSESSMENT OF THE CONFERENCE. HE WILL STAY AT THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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Message Attributes

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